



Department of Justice

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TAMPA MAN WHO SPENT MOTHER'S SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS ON HIMSELF GETS 2 YEARS IN PRISON

Tampa, Florida - U.S. District Judge James D. Whittemore yesterday sentenced Edward McDonald, age 71, to two years' imprisonment and a \$5,000 fine for conversion of his mother's Social Security benefits.

On October 20, 2008, the day his trial was to begin, Edward McDonald pleaded guilty to having converted money that he had received from the Social Security Administration on behalf of his elderly mother, and to lying on Social Security forms on which he was asked to provide an accounting of how he had spent the money.

According to court documents, Edward McDonald applied to Social Security to become the representative payee for his elderly mother, Lillie Mae McDonald, who lived in a nursing home and was unable to manage her own affairs. As representative payee, McDonald was given Lillie Mae McDonald's Social Security benefits, which were to be spent solely on her behalf. Instead, McDonald converted approximately \$37,502 in Social Security benefits paid on his mother's behalf and spent the money on himself. The court found that McDonald abused a position of trust and that his elderly mother was a vulnerable victim based upon her advanced age and mental status.

The case was investigated by the Social Security Administration, Office of the Inspector General. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Amanda C. Kaiser.